

IPEA
EPO
D-80298 Munich
Germany

28th December 2004

Dear Sir

PCT/GB03/005413
Our ref: Barcode Check (PCT)

Thank you for your Written Opinion dated 29th October 2004. The Opinion is an auto-generated Opinion which states in essence that the invention as claimed lacks novelty and/or inventive step in light of the art cited in the Search Report.

The Search Report cites 2 category X documents against the independent claims:

D1 US 6305716
D2 US 5121945

In light of the citations, the applicant files replacement pages as follows:

Replacement page 3 to replace page 3 as originally filed

Replacement pages 9 - 11 to replace pages 9 - 11 as originally filed.

Triplicate pages will follow, together with one set marked to show all changes.

Amended Claim 1 now reads:

A document which comprises the name of an ostensible beneficiary in human readable form, together with machine readable encoded data that can be decoded to generate a

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unique identifier, the unique identifier being a function of unique data present in a human readable form on an identification item carried by a true beneficiary of the document, but having no simple functional relationship to any data on the document such that the ostensible beneficiary of a document can be authenticated by comparing the unique identifier obtained from the document with the unique data on the identification item provided by the ostensible beneficiary.

Support for the new text (shaded) is at page 7 lines 16 - 17).

Novelty

The invention differs over the prior art because none of the prior art discloses or suggests comparing the unique identifier obtained from the document with unique, human readable data on a *separate* identification item provided by the ostensible beneficiary – i.e. authenticating the document by extracting encoded data from the document and comparing the decoded result with human readable data on a *separate* identification item. More specifically:

US 6305716: this neither shows nor suggests comparing data encoded onto a document with data on a *separate* identification item. Instead, the *same* document includes both machine readable and human readable versions of the same information.

US 5121945: also neither shows nor suggests comparing data encoded onto a document with data on a *separate* identification item. As with '716, a *single* document includes both machine readable and human readable versions of the same information.

In the prior art, the entire purpose of encoding data onto a document is to allow self-authentication. Self-authentication systems allow one to determine if a document has been tampered with, but not whether the person presenting the document is the person named on the document. The present invention represents a technical contribution because it simultaneously allows one to determine if a document has been tampered with, and whether the person presenting the document is the true beneficiary. If the document

has been tampered with to alter the apparent beneficiary, then the human readable name of the beneficiary on the document may match the name on the identification item of the person presenting the document, but the encoded data on the document will not match the corresponding data on the identification item presented by the ostensible beneficiary. If the document has not been tampered with, but the ostensible beneficiary is not the true beneficiary, then the encoded data on the document will not match the corresponding data on the ostensible beneficiary's identification item.

In structural terms, the document per se differs over prior art documents because it includes:

“machine readable encoded data that can be decoded to generate a unique identifier, the unique identifier being a function of unique data present in a human readable form on an identification item carried by a true beneficiary of the document, but having no simple functional relationship to any data on the document”

In self-authenticating documents, the unique identifier *does* have a simple functional relationship to other data on the document.

In the light of the amendments and arguments, reconsideration is respectfully requested. Should the examiner require further clarification, then a second Written Opinion is requested.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Langley